

### **3 Towns to Look At Shared Services**

**Wednesday, June 06, 2007**

**Leo Strupczewski**  
**Courier-Post Staff**

Three South Jersey towns received an \$18,000 grant to explore the feasibility of sharing fire and emergency medical services, officials said Tuesday.

Medford Lakes, Shamong and Tabernacle applied for the grant after a meeting last summer, Medford Farms Fire Company Chief John Welling said. The three towns often struggle with daytime response to fire and emergency calls because all three rely on volunteer service, Welling said.

"We're looking to see how best to regionalize our service," he said. "It was kind of a brainstorm I had last summer."

Welling said the three towns have hired a consultant to study the way each town responds to emergencies and how the towns can work together to reduce costs. Some initial questions raised were whether it makes sense for the towns to train together, purchase equipment together or respond to each other's emergencies.

"We're looking at all that stuff," Welling said. "We're happy we've been awarded (the grant)."

Seven other municipalities received grants for similar studies.

Gov. Jon S. Corzine said the towns -- Medford Lakes, Shamong and Tabernacle -- are showing a dedication to increasing efficiency.

"Sharing services is an integral part of increasing government efficiency and a vital component of my administration's property tax reform plan," Corzine said.